

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. Locking device for a vehicle door, comprising:

a lock fastened between an inside panel and an outside panel of a vehicle door which is fastened to the inside panel, said lock having a release lever for eliminating a locking position of the lock, and

an outside operating mechanism acting upon the release lever by way of a force transmission element, the outside operating mechanism comprising a supporting part fastened to an interior side of the outside panel and a swivelable pull handle arranged on the exterior side,

wherein a catching device is provided adjacent to the lock within the vehicle door, which catching device, during a defined lateral acceleration acting upon the vehicle, interacts with a supporting part of the outer operating mechanism and limits a bulging of the outside panel toward the outside.

2. Locking device according to Claim 1, wherein the catching device comprises a catch pin extending in a longitudinal direction of the vehicle and a holding part which is aligned in a transverse direction of the vehicle and has a receiving device surrounding the catch pin.

3. Locking device according to Claim 1, wherein the catch pin is provided on the supporting part.

4. Locking device according to Claim 3, wherein the catch pin is constructed in one piece with the supporting part.

5. Locking device according to Claim 3, wherein the catch pin is formed by a separately manufactured part which can be fastened to the supporting part.

6. Locking device according to Claim 2, wherein in an inoperative normal locked position of the vehicle door, the receiving device of the holding part extends at a radial distance from the interior catch pin, whereas, starting from a defined lateral acceleration acting upon the vehicle, the catch pin is locally supported on the outer edge of the receiving device.

7. Locking device according to Claim 4, wherein in an inoperative normal locked position of the vehicle door, the receiving device of the holding part extends at a radial distance from the interior catch pin, whereas, starting from a defined lateral acceleration acting upon the vehicle, the catch pin is locally supported on the outer edge of the receiving device.

8. Locking device according to Claim 5, wherein in an inoperative normal locked position of the vehicle door, the receiving device of the holding part extends at a radial distance from the interior catch pin, whereas, starting from a defined lateral acceleration acting upon the vehicle, the catch pin is locally supported on the outer edge of the receiving device.

9. Locking device according to Claim 2, wherein the holding part is formed by a molded-on lug of an interior door reinforcement.

10. Locking device according to Claim 4, wherein the holding part is formed by a molded-on lug of an interior door reinforcement.

11. Locking device according to Claim 5, wherein the holding part is formed by a molded-on lug of an interior door reinforcement.

12. Locking device according to Claim 6, wherein the holding part is formed by a molded-on lug of an interior door reinforcement.

13. Locking device according to Claim 2, wherein the holding part is formed by a bent-away lug of the lock.

14. Locking device according to Claim 3, wherein the holding part is formed by a bent-away lug of the lock.

15. Locking device according to Claim 4, wherein the holding part is formed by a bent-away lug of the lock.

16. Locking device according to Claim 6, wherein the holding part is formed by a

bent-away lug of the lock.

17. Locking device according to Claim 2, wherein the holding part is fastened to the inside panel or to the lock.

18. Locking device according to Claim 3, wherein the holding part is fastened to the inside panel or to the lock.

19. Locking device according to Claim 4, wherein the holding part is fastened to the inside panel or to the lock.

20. Locking device according to Claim 6, wherein the holding part is fastened to the inside panel or to the lock.

21. Locking device according to Claim 2, wherein the catch pin protrudes through the receiving device of the holding part and projects beyond the receiving device on both sides.

22. Locking device according to Claim 3, wherein the catch pin protrudes through the receiving device of the holding part and projects beyond the receiving device on both sides.

23. Locking device according to Claim 4, wherein the catch pin protrudes through the receiving device of the holding part and projects beyond the receiving device on both sides.

24. Locking device according to Claim 6, wherein the catch pin protrudes through the receiving device of the holding part and projects beyond the receiving device on both sides.

25. A mechanism operable to prevent unintentional release of a vehicle door lock assembly during excess lateral acceleration of a vehicle causing bulging a side door structure which supports a part of the door lock assembly, said mechanism comprising:

a catching device disposed between vehicle door panels where the door lock assembly is disposed, said catching device being operable to limit lateral bulging of a door panel supporting part of the door lock assembly to thereby prevent unintentional release of the vehicle door lock.

26. A mechanism according to Claim 25, wherein the catching device comprises a catch pin extending in a longitudinal direction of the vehicle and a holding part which is aligned in a transverse direction of the vehicle and has a receiving device surrounding the catch pin.

27. A mechanism according to Claim 25, wherein the catch pin is provided on the supporting part.

28. A mechanism according to Claim 25, wherein the catch pin is constructed in one piece with the supporting part.

29. A mechanism according to Claim 25, wherein in an inoperative normal locked position of the vehicle door, the receiving device of the holding part extends at a radial distance from the interior catch pin, whereas, starting from a defined lateral acceleration acting upon the vehicle, the catch pin is locally supported on the outer edge of the receiving device.

30. A mechanism according to Claim 25, wherein the holding part is formed by a molded-on lug of an interior door reinforcement.

31. A mechanism according to Claim 25, wherein the catch pin protrudes through the receiving device of the holding part and projects beyond the receiving device on both sides.